

ARTIFICIAL HUMAN FECES

This application claims priority and benefit of a provisional patent application entitled Artificial Human Feces, serial no. 60/460,313 filed 04/04/2003, now pending.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention

This invention relates to quality control and proficiency testing of occult blood, and more particularly relates to providing a control material for testing for occult blood in human feces.

History of the Prior Art

Controls are frequently used in testing as an established procedure in the prior art, but are not part of fecal occult blood testing procedures which can have significant error rates. (See Selinger, Roanne R. E., Norman, Sharon and Dominitz, Jason A. Failure of Health Care Professionals to Interpret Fecal Occult Blood Tests Accurately. *The American Journal of Medicine*, January 2003, Vol. 114, pages 64 - 67) It is important to improve occult blood test accuracy as such tests are used for colorectal cancer screening.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

A method of preparing and using an artificial mixture which simulates human feces is disclosed which mixture can be prepared with or without constituents which give a positive test for occult hemoglobin, thus making it useful as a control material or for proficiency testing in which laboratories are furnished with samples of unknown composition to test their ability to detect analytes of interest.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT(S)

The basic mixture of this invention which simulates the appearance and texture of human feces can be prepared as follows: to an aqueous base are added at least one thickening agent such as polysaccharides (e.g., starch), polypeptides (e.g., gelatin), and vegetable gums (e.g., guar gum); at least one stabilizer to prevent syneresis (e.g., pyrogenic silica); at least one preservative to resist bacterial or fungal attack (e.g., antibiotics or sodium azide); at least one coloring agent to mimic the color of human feces (e.g., burnt sienna and burnt umber); an acid or base (e.g., sodium bicarbonate or hydrochloric acid) to facilitate the solution of any ingredients which require such facilitation; and, if desired, at least one odorant to mimic the appropriate odor (e.g., indole and skatole).

However, it is not so simple to prepare artificial feces which give an appropriately intense positive test for occult hemoglobin with any of the commonly available tests for this purpose which tests are on the market. Some tests depend solely on the fact that hemoglobin acts as a peroxidase, and provide the appropriate reagents to develop a color from this peroxidase reaction if the feces contain an amount of hemoglobin (from food, or the normal amount of intestinal bleeding which occurs in an individual who does not suffer from pathological amounts of intestinal bleeding). Other tests specifically detect human hemoglobin by means of its reaction with an antibody which reacts less or not at all with hemoglobin from other species. They are much more sensitive than the former type, more than making up for the fact that they fail to react with hemoglobin originating from dietary meat.

Satisfactory results are obtained with both types of occult hemoglobin tests by adding to the artificial series a mixture of non-human and human hemoglobins in a ratio of from 2.5:1 to 7.5:1. In a preferred embodiment of this invention the following materials are dissolved or

suspended in one liter of water to make synthetic feces which do not give a positive test for occult blood:

Sodium Azide 5 g
Burnt Sienna Acrylic Color 6.375 g
Burnt Umber Acrylic Color 5.375 g
Gelatin 4.175 g
Pyrogenic Silica 166.8 ml
Corn Starch 150 g

To make a preparation which gives a positive test for occult blood, a similar mixture is made, but with the addition of:

Human Hemoglobin .333 g
Bovine Hemoglobin 1.688 g
plus 100 mg of sodium bicarbonate to facilitate the dissolution of the hemoglobin.

Thus this invention includes:

- (1) Compositions for use in quality control or in proficiency testing of occult-blood tests, comprising a constituent or constituents which act as a peroxidase and one or more of thickening agents, stabilizers, coloring agents, odorants and preservatives in an aqueous base.
- (2) Such compositions, in which the peroxidase-acting constituents consist of one part human hemoglobin to 2.5 - 7.5 parts of other peroxidase-acting constituents.
- (3) Such compositions, in which the peroxidase-acting constituents consist of one part of human hemoglobin to 2.5 - 7.5 parts of non-human hemoglobin.

Although the present invention has been described with reference to particular embodiments, it will be apparent to those skilled in the art that variations and modifications can be substituted therefor without departing from the principles and spirit of the invention.